

09 - 0840

**Subcommittee on Government Accountability,
Legislative Commission on Planning and Fiscal Policy**

A Subcommittee on Government Accountability of the Legislative Commission on Planning and Fiscal Policy was established in a law passed in 2008. The Subcommittee is required to report to the full commission by February 1 or each odd-numbered year with long-range recommendations on the further implementation and uses of Minnesota Milestones and other government accountability improvement.

The report below describes the activities related to the Subcommittee's responsibilities that were carried out in 2008. The legislation establishing the Subcommittee was effective August 1, 2008.

The Subcommittee held one meeting on December 16, 2008. The following information was presented and discussed.

Subcommittee Membership: Senators Cohen (co-chair), Bakk, Clark, Frederickson; Representatives Solberg (co-chair), Kohls, Lenczewski, Loeffler

Sesquicentennial Commission:

Chapter 318 required the Sesquicentennial Commission to provide input regarding Minnesota Milestones as part of its Plan for the Future activities. Jane Leonard, executive director, reported that the Sesquicentennial Commission administered a survey at the State Fair to determine current opinion regarding the Milestones. The Sesquicentennial Commission effort largely reaffirmed the themes presented in the Milestones.

Administration Work Group:

Chapter 318 directed the commissioner of administration to establish a working group to assist in the use of Milestones, including considering collaborative opportunities with community organizations and higher education institutions. The state demographer, Tom Gillaspay, reported to the Subcommittee on efforts to date to review the indicators used in the current Milestones. The Milestones project began in 1991 with regular updates through 2002. There have been no updates since 2002. The Milestones were organized into five central themes with 19 public policy goals and then 70 indicators. Gillaspay said that a substantial effort would be required to update the indicators. He also suggested collaborating with Compass, a recently initiated effort by the Wilder Foundation, to similarly track statewide goals using indicators to track progress towards those goals. Gillaspay will provide recommendations to the Subcommittee on ways to update the Milestones indicators.

Minnesota Management and Budget:

Chapter 318 also amended M.S. 16A.10 to require budget change items in the budget books to identify relevant Minnesota Milestones and other statewide goals and indicators related to the proposed initiative.

The budget instructions sent to state agencies on July 10, 2008 included a new section called "Key Goals". This section is to identify one or more broad strategic goals and how they relate to the agency, program or activity being discussed. MMB's instructions directed agencies to select goals from Minnesota Milestones, agency strategic goals or other state wide goals. The base budget documents released at the beginning of December included this information.

Legislative Commission on Planning and Fiscal Policy

The full commission met on November 21 to review the state's use of performance measures. Barbark Armajani, with the Public Strategies Group, discussed with the Commission the value and use of performance measures, especially those related to outcomes and results. He noted the potential value of using a system like Milestones to track progress on key outcomes. House and Senate fiscal staff reviewed the use of performance measures by selected state agencies.

Relevant Minnesota Statutes

M.S. 3.885, Subd. 10. **Subcommittee on Government Accountability.** The commission must form a Subcommittee on Government Accountability under section 3.3056 to review recommendations from the commissioner of finance under section 16A.10, subdivision 1c, and to review recommendations from the commissioners of finance and administration on how to improve the use of Minnesota Milestones and other statewide goals and indicators in state planning and budget documents. The subcommittee shall consider testimony from representatives from the following organizations and agencies: (1) nonprofit organizations involved in the preparation of Minnesota Milestones; (2) the University of Minnesota and other higher education institutions; (3) the Department of Finance and other state agencies; and (4) other legislators. The subcommittee shall report to the commission by February 1 of each odd-numbered year with long-range recommendations for the further implementation and uses of Minnesota Milestones and other government accountability improvements.

M.S. 16A.10, Subd. 1c. **Performance measures for change items.** For each change item in the budget proposal requesting new or increased funding, the budget document must present proposed performance measures that can be used to determine if the new or increased funding is accomplishing its goals. To the extent possible, each budget change item must identify relevant Minnesota Milestones and other statewide goals and indicators related to the proposed initiative. The commissioner must report to the Subcommittee on Government Accountability established under section 3.885, subdivision 10, regarding the format to be used for the presentation and selection of Minnesota Milestones and other statewide goals and indicators.